

[Jack W. Patterson]

Folkstuff - Rangelore [4,465?] Words

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by

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232 Pioneer Reminiscences UVALDE COUNTY, DISTRICT #10

[????]

JACK W. PATTERSON

Uvalde, Texas.

"I was pretty young when the Indians were in this count county but I remember when I was standing around wishing I could go on one of those Indian scouts. Then when night come and they sent me to lock the stable door I would be scared to death, afraid an Indian was going to grab me every step. We used to keep the stable door locked to keep the Indians from steeling the horses.

"I was born in 1862 but I can surely remember when my grandfather's slaves left after the war. There was one girl named Margaret they persuaded to leave with them, but she got away from them after they started and come running back. She stayed with my grandfather and grandmother from then on. Margaret washed for me and my wife after we were married.

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"Grandfather Patterson settled/ Patterson the settlement. The whole family came there. Uncle John, Newman and George. Grandfather's name was George W. and in 1874, he came to Texas from Alabama and settled in St. Augustine County, then he went to Smith County. In 1851 he moved to Uvalde County, settling seven miles south of the present town of Sabinal where Chunky Shane now lives. He pre-empted a homestead, and later added to his tract by purchase. He assisted in organizing the county and helping locate the county seat.

"Farming was just an experiment out here, then. Indians raided the settlement often. My grandfather had his place raided on several occasions. He continued to develop his place till the outbreak of the war. C12 - 2/11/41 - Texas

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When the war was over his slaves were freed.

"My grandfather/ Bowles was killed by the Indians. He was a great Indian fighter and once killed two Indians in one night when they were trying to steal horses. He had also settled in the Patterson settlement about 1855. He had brought some good horses to this country and the year after he came here, he settled on a place west of the river and started up a ranch. He found it necessary to build a strong pen in front of his house so that one of his boys could stand guard over the horses at night. They had a blind fixed up so that the guard could stay inside of it without being seen by the Indians. But they failed to mount guard one night and in no time, the horses were out of the pen and going in a dead run. The bell could be heard and every one of the boys and my grandfather grabbed their guns and jumped on their horses and started after them. Grandfather even ran out in his night clothes and without his shoes but he caught up with the horses first. He saw one of the Indians leave the bunch but was not sure but what it was one of his own boys and wouldn't shoot. They got the horses back and Doke stood guard in the blind but grandfather went down on the river and got under a hackberry tree near a trail that come down, and sat down and waited. It wasn't long before the boys heard a shot and knew it my grandfather's

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shot gun. They were afraid he was being attacked and ran down there to him. When they got there, he was standing over a dead Indian with a scalp in his hand and said to them, "Hog my cats, if I haven't got one of 'em!" That was about the worst slang he ever used. He told the boys that there were three of the Indians coming down the trail and he first saw then in about fifty feet of him but he waited till they got within about thirty feet and fired one barrel of his shot gun at the first Indian. He fell and the other two disappeared but the one who fell raised up and tried to shoot an arrow 3 at my grandfather, but the old man emptied the other barrel and his six-shooter into the Indian and ended him.

"While they were looking around, they heard a groan, but they could never locate it. One of their dogs struck a trail and started out but soon came back with an arrow sticking through him, so they all went to the house and sent a runner to the settlement to give the alarm. There were several of the men got to the ranch before daylight and when they all went down to where the shooting had taken place, they had a great time over the dead Indian. They looked around and discovered another dead Indian in about thirty feet of the first one. He had been shot in the bowels. They later found the other Indian about four miles from where the first two were killed.

"My grandfather Bowles was in the Indian battle on the Leona where the Indians were massacred but sometime in 1859, he settled on the Leona not far from where he had the fight. In the same year, he was killed by the Indians. The same Indians killed John Davenport right close to the present town of Sabinal and they found his body at once because some Mexicans witnessed the killing. But they never found my grandfather's body for a day or two and it wasn't very far from the back of the field. They had tied my grandfather's horse in the brush to get him to come out after the horse. He had gone down to the Patterson settlement to his daughter's and when he walked out to get his horse next morning, he didn't wear a gun. He found the field fence down and knew his mare had gone out of it, so he followed , and evidence showed that the mare had been tied there for some time because it was all tracked and trampled where she had been.

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"The settlers took up the trail after the alarm had been given and some of them were: William Thomas, James McCormick, Clabe Davenport, John Kennedy, Nobe Griner, Frank Isbell, Ben Pulliam, John Q. 4 Daugherty and others. Daugherty was in command of the Minute men but Lieutenant Hazen had come from Fort Inge with some men and he was in command of all of them. Doke Bowles (my uncle) helped trail and he soon came across the shoes of my grandfather and though they hadn't found his body, he knew he was dead then. About the third day, the settlers and soldiers overtook the Indians and surprised them. There was a running fight of over twenty miles that day. When the settlers ran up the Indians, there was a terrible confusion and effort to get mounted on horses and get away. The settlers had begun to yell. One Indian tried to rope horses for the others and those who didn't get a horse, jumped on a horse behind another Indian. A man named Arnette came up to my uncle and offered to trade him his horse. " Fuzzy Buck," an they had already agreed to do that if they had to run the Indians. So they exchanged horses. Fuzzy Buck was a race horse and though my uncle would halt beside those that were shot by the Indians to see what he could do for them, his horse could soon over take the Indians again. Lt. Hazen was shot from his horse and my uncle thought he was certainly killed. One Indian was killed right at first who was dressed finer than the rest. He was the finest looking Indian in the bunch. He was a young Indian, nearly white and his hair was soft instead of coarse. He was ornamented all over with rings, beads and sliver trappings. He had on John Davenport's pistol belt and tied to it was my grandfather's scalp. A man by the name of Williams and Doke Bowles had a close battle with an Indian and neither one of them had but one load in his pistol. The Indian shot Williams off his horse and when Doke fired his last load into the Indian, he had to dodge arrows himself. Then the Indian got on William's horse and left yelling. When he turned to go, my uncle counted nine bullet holes in him and he was bloody from head to foot. He said he noticed an Indian throw something under a cedar tree during the chase and he remembered where the tree was. He 5 went back later and found it. It was an old-fashioned reticule with a drawstring in it and it had four children's scalps, some paint and poison.

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"There were three Indians finally left in the chase and my uncle was still riding the race horse and overtaking them every now and then till his loaded pistols played out, then he would have to wait for the other settlers to catch up with more loaded guns for him. There seemed to be no way to kill that Indian on Williams' horse, but when the three got to the top of a hill, my uncle saw them dismount and two of them lay down. They found out from some Indians from the reservation, later on, that those two died.

"My grandfather's body was found at Guide Hill, or Pilot Knob as some of them called the particular place. They had shot him with three arrows, at about ten steps, and each arrow was about an inch apart in the left breast. Doke Bowles had found his vest in the running fight they had and knew before they found the body just how his father was killed.

"None of the men in the fight died, but all were badly wounded. Williams was put on a horse and moved back. Lieutenant Hazen was left with some soldiers to guard him and Judge McCormick volunteered to go to Fort Clark after an army surgeon. He made the trip all right, but he said he had to outrun the Indians. It took about a day and a-half to make the trip and when the surgeon got back with McCormick, it was three days and nights that McCormick was gone. He pulled spikes out of some of the men and took Hazen back to Fort Clerk and in about three weeks, he was taken to Fort Inge.

"We moved to the Frio at the Leahey settlement where my father run the saw mill for Uncle Newman and Uncle Tom Leahey. They were Partners in it when it first started up. My father's sister married Tom Leahey. We moved from Leahey to the Patterson settlement again, 6 then to Rio Frio. What little schooling I had was on the Frio. The only teacher was Judge McCormick. I remember Old Judge McCormick. He had snow white hair and the forefinger on his right hand was stiff. He was strict enough in school, all right. From the Frio we moved to the Leons. The first job I ever had was down an the old Adams ranch working for Jim [Delrymple?]. He was a son-in law of John Patterson's, my uncle. Dalrymple was a cattleman and owned several sections of land down there. There was a pole fence around the place. Barb wire hadn't been heard of then. All I had to do was

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ride and bring up the cows with young calves. There wasn't much required, although there were several hundred cattle on the place. Every time he came out to the place we would run foot races and horseback races. He was ready to run with me and he'd beat me every time. We'd bet 50¢ or so on a race but he always beat and won the money. He would laugh at me and have a big time. Once I thought I had a good scheme worked up but he saw through it and wouldn't go in for it. I said, 'You won't do anything unless you have a sure thing of it.' He said, 'Nobody but a d— fool would!' He was always in a good humor and it showed what kind of man he was for I was only about 15 years old and he was a grown man with a family. He seemed to know that a kid liked to play. We didn't mope around when he came out there.

“As well as I remember, that dam on the Leons was constructed by several of the old-timers. Old man Bill Smith was the head of it. Then, there was Butch Dillard, Pete Bowles, Doke Bowles and Ed Taylor.

“After I went back home and worked for my father, he gave Sam and I an interest to take his sheep and run them for him. We went down on the Chaperosa with about 6,500 head. That was below the “Murlo” where the Fenley settlement was. We had two Mexican herders. Down in that brushy/ country we lost less sheep than out in the open country. The sheep seemed 7 to know they could get lost and stayed together better. We run those sheep down there about three or four years. I think we had started to the divide when we got into a shooting scrape with a Mexican.

“I was taking the sheep up on the divide and had got to the Frio when me stopped our flock to let them rest up. Someone had come into camp and said the Mexicans had killed Allen Blackman. We had gone to school with Allen and we were stirred up about it. They took us to where Allen had been killed and there he was laying in the road and they had shot him in the head. We hunted that day and night and rounded up Mexicans all around there. We laid in wait at Benny's camp and waited for his Mexican to come in for we thought he would know something. We surrounded the camp and waited for this Mexican

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and didn't know what time he would get in or where he was, but we knew he wasn't at the camp as some of the boys slipped down there and saw there was no one there. The herder came in the night sometime, however, and we told him that we had learned that he knew where the Mexican who did the killing was hiding and we were going to kill him if he didn't tell us where he or they were. I think Tuck Van Pelt, Reading Black, Buck Burditt, Butch Patterson and several others were in the party. The Mexican said he would locate him and when he came back, he said he had him. We got on our horses and divided our forces. We were to surround the place.

"The other force got there first and we heard some shooting so I said, 'Let's hurry for it will all be over before we get there!' As we got to the place where the shooting was taking place, we saw a Mexican come running toward us and dart into a plum thicket. We were up, overlooking this plumb thicket, sitting on our horses and watched these other boys make the fight. That old canyon was just full of smoke. But that Mexican kept them fought off and got away. They came back and said the fellow was gone. I told them there was one in that plum thicket, but 8 they didn't think so. They told the Mexican herder of Benny's (who had come to us when he heard the shooting) to go into the thicket and tell the Mexican if he would come out he wouldn't let the man kill him. So the herder went and told him and the Mexican give himself up and come out. Butch Patterson and another man were taking him to Rio Frio where there was a justice of the peace to give him a preliminary trial but some men met them on the trail before they got to Rio Frio and killed the Mexican. He never got the preliminary hearing. It probably would have ended that way anyhow.

"I took the sheep up around Yellow Banks on the Frio and then over to Chalk Bluff on the Nueces. It was while I was it Chalk Bluff that I met a girl down at old Captain Benson's. I happened to ride down at Benson's that day horseback. She was George Clark's daughter, Maude. They had settled up at Montell and had come from New York. The girls had gone to school at Brooklyn, and after they moved out here, Maude went back and

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finished her schooling, which took her about two years. She taught school about three years after we met and we married in 1890.

“It seems funny that her father's and mother's names were the same as my father's and mother's. Both our parents were named George and Elizabeth. Another funny coincident: My youngest sister is named George Washington and she married George Washington Van Pelt.

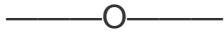
“We had a very quiet wedding. No one was there but just the family. We came to Uvalde in a buggy and went on to San Antonio for a few days and bought our furniture. Then me moved out to the ranch at Yellow Banks. I had separated my sheep from my father's and had gone out in business for myself. But along about then, a terrible drought hit this country and burned things up. It was during Cleveland's administration. He took the tariff off of wool and ruined the sheep man.

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What the drought hadn't accomplished, the free trade did, an there was no sale for domestic wool. We lost over half of our sheep from the drought alone.

“About 1895, we went into the grocery business at Montell. We just started up a small store but went into general merchandising later on. We had to scratch sometimes to get by but we brought up all our children there and gave them an education so we feel that we have a lot to be grateful for. When the depression hit, it gave us a bad time but we came through. On account of our health, I sold the store an and left Montell but I had to sell at a sacrifice. In 1920, I had traded for some bees and had kept them as a side line. They had thrived until now I make my living off of the bees.

“We have three children: Marjorie, who married Dr. Wells and lives in Edna; Bess who married Alfred Egg of Edna and Clark who is unmarried and teaching in a University in Missouri.”



MRS J.W. PATTERSON

“There were three girls and a boy In my family when we came here in '79. My sisters were Margaret and Georgia and my brother was Will, who went back to New York later and died there. The rest of us stayed in Texas and love it here.

“There were no fences, no railroad nor mail route when I first came here. I remember that anybody who came down from the canyon would bring back the mail for the whole community. Maybe you would get your mail, or maybe it would be lost.

“We arrived here in wagons and we went on out of town on the Nueces 10 Canyon road and had dinner on Cook's Slough. We had bought meat in town from a market that was not screened. Of course there were no screens out here then, but we were astonished to see that market right there on the plaza with nothing but coarse lattice-work as protection against the flies and dust. Dust! It was ankle deep in dry weather and the mud was ankle deep in wet weather. I remember that dust especially — yes, of course, along the roads. The countryside was green and beautiful but the white dust of these roads that boiled up like clouds are still a vivid memory to me.

“We bought some meat, however, and socked it out there where we stopped for dinner. I looked at things with new eyes, they were so different to anything I had ever known. And my mother who had been used to having her mail twice a day and her magazines — it must have been extremely new to her. But she had a wonderful sense of humor and I can remember how she laughed off the frets and worries of those days.

“The little school house in Uvalde that we passed seemed to be just a little shack with mesquite brush all around it. It was August when we got here, so it naturally didn't look its best.

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"The rivers were full of fish. We saw lots of game as there was lots of it those days and we practically lived off of it. There were turkeys and venison and sometimes, people brought us bear meat.

"After we were settled and were getting along all right, my father had to go back to New York on business. It was decided that I should go back with him and finish school at Brooklyn. I think the railroad had just come through about then so we went back by rail. I had to stay two years with my uncle and never came home during the time..I certainly did get homesick. I had learned to like the little bit of Texas I had got acquainted with and I was anxious to get back to it and my family. My father had been to Texas several times and because of his travels through 11 this part of Texas in 1858, it was to be our future home. He liked this part of the state and I have his diary written as he crossed Texas on his way to California that year with a wagon train. He was a Confederate Soldier and had been stationed down at Galveston on a gunboat during the Civil War. He married my mother after he came back to New York at the close of the war.

"Here is a picture of Mr. Patterson and me the day we were married. You can get an Idea of how we looked then and what they wore. This dress I was wearing was of white silk and you can see that the coat of Mr. Patterson's suit buttoned up close to the throat. We were surely dressed up.

"I had never heard a coyote till after I married. There were no coyotes up around Montell and when we went to the ranch from San Antonio I heard them in the night and it nearly scared me to death. They came up all around the house and it wasn't very pleasant to me.

"I am 70 years old, but I still like to go visiting. I am leaving shortly for Missouri to stay with Clark until about June, then he will accompany me home. He plans to do some research work down in Mexico City this summer providing there is no upheaval or war down there by then. "

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